

Report to	Communities Scrutiny
Date of meeting	19th of October 2023
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Barry Mellor (Lead Member for Highways & Environment) / Tony Ward (Corporate Director for Environment & Economy)
Head of Service	Paul Jackson
Report author	Simon Lammond, Waste and Recycling Manager / Lowri Roberts, Project Manager
Title	Update for Waste Service Remodelling Project

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. This report provides Communities Scrutiny with an update regarding the planned service change for waste collection in Denbighshire.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. The report is to inform Communities Scrutiny of the current progress of the project and to highlight the risk around the timely approval of the operational permit required for the new Denbigh Waste Transfer Station.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That Communities Scrutiny discusses the contents of the report and provides observations on these elements.
- 3.2. That Communities Scrutiny confirms that it has read, understood, and taken account of the recently updated Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 1) as part of its consideration.

4. Report details

- 4.1. In December 2018 Cabinet agreed that the Denbighshire waste collection model would change from a co-mingled recycling model to a new kerbside sort system. This includes other service changes such as the introduction of a new Absorbent Hygiene Products service and a change in non-recyclable collection to 4 weekly.
- 4.2. Several elements are needed to support the service change, the key investment being a new fit for purpose Waste Transfer Station (WTS) in Denbigh. The new WTS will be completed in December 2023. For the new WTS to become operational, a permit must be approved by Natural Resources Wales. This is to ensure that the new WTS meets all the regulatory requirements as set out by NRW.
- 4.3. In January 2023 Denbighshire submitted the permit application for the new waste transfer station in Denbigh. There has been a considerable delay by NRW in 'duly making' the application due to a significant volume of work. In July 2023 DCC were notified that an officer had been allocated to the application. The application was 'duly made' on the 04/09/2023.
- 4.4. Following the duly made status, a period of technical assessment takes place. NRW will issue a Schedule 5 Notice if they require any further information. NRW will aim to conclude the process within a 4-month period, but this 4-months relates to NRW time only. Where requests for information are made to DCC the clock will stop, this can draw out the 4-month timescale considerably depending on the nature of the information requested.
- 4.5. The waste service is required to undertake a significant recruitment exercise to ensure the service is fully resourced to meet the service implementation. Following discussion with NRW in September, and a review of the key planning activities for the roll out of the new service, we are planning for the new service to be implemented from June 2024.

Absorbent Hygiene Products Service Roll Out (AHP)

- 4.6. The new AHP service has gone live as of the 25th of September. This is currently a pilot service for the LL16 / LL17 postcode areas. This covers St Asaph, Denbigh, Bodfari, Llandyrnog, Llanrhaeadr, Henllan, Nantglyn, The Green, Trefnant, St Asaph, Allt Goch, Rhualt and Tremeirchion.

- 4.7. The service have had approximately 600 households sign up for this service, this number was within the range expected due to the demographic make-up of the two areas. There are 8,890 households within the two pilot areas, based on an average sign up of around 8% it was expected that roughly 711 households would be eligible. It is important to note that sign up rates across Wales vary considerably, likely due to demographics.
- 4.8. Enforcement officers will be actively servicing this area as part of the pilot to advise residents and monitor the expected reduction of AHP within the residual waste stream. This approach allows better monitoring and control of the early roll out as the targeted area is operationally more efficient and provides accessible transport links to Parc Adfer who will process the waste until the new service is launched.

Non-Standard Households

- 4.9. The Waste service delivers a standard service across the county, however not all properties are suitable for the standard service due to storage issues, for example communal households. The service provides a non-standard for these households, which is largely a sack service. Across Denbighshire there are currently 5,203 non-standard properties.
- 4.10. The service has undertaken a survey of these non-standard households prior to the implementation of the new service. New solutions will be required for some households as dry recycling will need to be collected as source segregated. The 5,203 non-standard properties have been allocated into categories, these are:
- Green (3,398 properties)
 - Amber (915 properties)
 - Red (890 properties)
- 4.11. Following the survey, it has been determined that the 'green' households will be able to have a trolleybox (the standard service) at their property. This is the majority of current non-standard households. The Amber properties will require a further 'deep dive' and it is expected that some of these could have a trolleybox, the remaining would have a communal solution such as 240litre source segregated containers in place of the comingled 1,100litre bins plus some properties would have a sack service. The red properties would all still require a sack service.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Themes?

- 5.1. The implementation of the new waste service is linked with the corporate priority 'A Greener Denbighshire'. Directly this relates to the theme to improve recycling rates and reduce waste by introducing the new kerbside recycling system from 2024. This will underpin Denbighshire's commitment to becoming a Net Zero Carbon organisation by 2030.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

- 6.1. The costs of implementing the new service changes are covered from the mobilisation and container budget allocations within the overall project budget.
- 6.2. Implementation of the new service will impact on various council services, including Customer Services and the Communications Team, and representatives from these service areas are included in the relevant mobilisation work stream project teams.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

- 7.1. The overall outcome of the Well-being Impact Assessment is positive – see Appendix 1 for further details.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

- 8.1. The principle of implementing the new waste model, following the Welsh Government Blueprint for waste services, was originally approved at the Strategic Investment Group (SIG) and Cabinet in December 2018. An updated Business Case was also presented to, and approved by, the Council in April 2022.
- 8.2. In December 2021, an update was provided to Communities Scrutiny Committee, and this report also included an updated Waste Collections Policy.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1. Although there are no direct financial implications of this report, the business case for the large capital investment in waste over recent years has been based on the revenue implications of the model described in this report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1. There are three key risks concerning the implementation of the new service model by March 2024. These are:

- **Permit Approval:** Operations at the new WTS are subject to the approval of a bespoke permit which was submitted in January 2023 to Natural Resources Wales (NRW). The permit needs to be approved before the service change can take place. This process can take approximately 12 months, but we are engaging with NRW at an operational and strategic level regarding this issue.
- **WTS Readiness:** The WTS is currently scheduled for completion in December 2023. This is currently on track, which should allow the WTS to be ready for the assembly and delivery of containers in readiness for the roll out to residents. Progress to completion of the WTS is being managed and monitored by the Project Team and Board.
- **Staff Availability:** Although plans are in place to recruit the staff needed to run the new service, there is a risk that the full quota of positions are not filled. The service is working closely with HR to plan the most appropriate recruitment exercise for these types of roles and will also work with Working Denbighshire on the recruitment of staff and work placements.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000

11.2. Section 7 of the Council's Constitution.